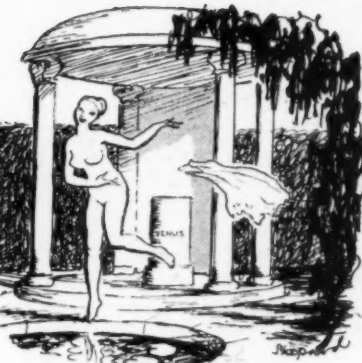


CHARIVARIA



"WE have all been embarrassed," said Mr. Gaitskell on behalf of the Members of the House of Commons, "by having to raise the matter of our own salaries in recent years." How fortunate we are, in the circumstances, to have a House where duty triumphs so constantly over embarrassment.

Wot, No Ideology?

ONE of the most important aspects of the new Russian upheaval, writes Edward Crankshaw in *The Observer*, is the almost total absence of Party jargon in the Central Committee's resolution. "Ideology," he says, "is scarcely mentioned, which is most remarkable when we remember the normal tone of these controversies." It is true that as soon as Khrushchev opened his mouth on his own account he appears to have said of his former colleagues that "Both in internal problems and in matters of foreign policy

long review of a book about Yugoslavia. It was an anticlimax to find the Russian victories in the Stewards' Cup and the Double Sculls at Henley reported by a mere rowing correspondent.

Roundabouts, Swings, Razors, Etc.

LORD ABERDARE, Chairman of the National Association of Boys' Clubs, has recently drawn attention to the alarming increase in drunkenness



among teen-agers. It seems fair to point out that they probably only drink to keep their minds off the dangers of smoking.

Velvet Hand in Iron Glove

DIPLOMATIC methods are subtly changing all over the world, and Mr. Bandaranaike in a recent speech showed himself well abreast of developments when he said "Our biggest victory will be in August, when we will persuade the Tamils to call off the civil disobedience campaign of their own accord."

Question of Regularization

ANGRY hosiery manufacturers have sent Sir David Eccles a pair of yellow bathing trunks, of Japanese make but labelled "Empire Made." Surely the Japanese ought to know by now that the word should be "Commonwealth."

Non-stop from Waterloo

EVEN if the appeal for funds to maintain the Imperial Crypt at Farnborough Abbey, which contains the tombs of the Emperor Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie, were not worthy of support

for its own sake, it is to be hoped that there are still those among us with enough romance in our natures to respond to an appeal which lists "Napoleon" and "Wellington" side-by-side among its signatories.

Clearing the Decks

NOTHING but good can come of the formation of the Civic Trust, which, under the presidency of Mr. Duncan Sandys (in an unofficial capacity), is to stimulate general interest in good architecture and town-and-country-planning, and campaign against Subtopia. Nothing, that is, unless a few of its more intransigent supporters begin with a demand to have the headquarters of the Royal Institute of British Architects in Portland Place pulled down,

That'll Teach Them

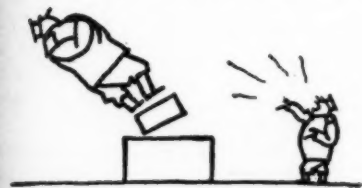
WE are inured to the present-day doctrine that we must all work at the pace of the slowest worker; but surely it was carrying egalitarian doctrine too far when Lord Hailsham, opening a new grammar school in Kent, told his



hearers "So long as I am Minister of Education gifted children will be given a fair crack of the whip."

I'll Stick to Reefers, Thanks

THE Youth Director of the New Jersey Seventh Day Adventists has issued a new code of commandments for the guidance of American boys and girls. It includes such gay instructions as "Thou shalt not bow down to Elvis, Frankie or Tab," "Thou shalt not call thy parents 'squares,'" "Thou shalt keep from becoming a slouch or a



they are sectarian and dogmatic, and they use a scholastic, inert approach to Marxism-Leninism"; but really even that is virtually nothing when you think of the amount of Party jargon usually necessary to remove a Communist politician from the scene.

Crankshaw's Benefit

MR. CRANKSHAW, incidentally, must have done almost as well out of this *coup d'état* as Mr. Khrushchev. Besides a long story on the front page of *The Observer* and another, even longer, in the middle, he had in the same paper a whole page about Mr. Nagy and a

fashion-plate," and so on, and ends triumphantly "Thou shalt have good, clean, Christian fun—lots of it." Cautious American youth may first like to know whether this is a representative sample.

Dial PRU for Prudence

MR. BARRY KAY, a Regional Controller at the Board of Trade, has been whipping up our industrialists into a recognition that recent slight setbacks in trading conditions with the Middle



East are now over and done with, and urges British manufacturers to spread their agencies in those parts "as widely as possible," and "investigate the market possibilities by sending out senior representatives." A good defence lawyer should accompany members of any Cairo mission.

Be It Never So Humble

THE choice of Lord Listowel as Governor-General of Ghana is endorsed by a paragraph in *West Africa*, which notes approvingly his Socialism, his academic distinction, the part he played in handing over power in India and Burma and his unlikeliness "to have grandiose ideas about his residence." As his residence is to be occupied by the Prime Minister, this last point is of only minor importance.

Postscript

"THE Communist Party," says a Moscow broadcast denying that the deposed Russian leaders have been imprisoned, "is not in the habit of taking petty revenge." *Petty revenge?* Who ever said it was?

Opportunity Missed

"When I was on a tour of inspection they would hustle men out of the way. I resented it."—Mr. Shimell

WHEN Tommy was hustled in wrath Out of Emanuel's path

Somebody should have prevented it Or at least have managed things so That each got a chance to show

The other how much he resented it.

PROFESSIONALS ALL

AN IMAGINARY CONVERSATION

LORD ELDRITCH: Three guineas a day or a hundred and twenty thousand dollars for two years, it makes no difference. It's the principle of the thing.

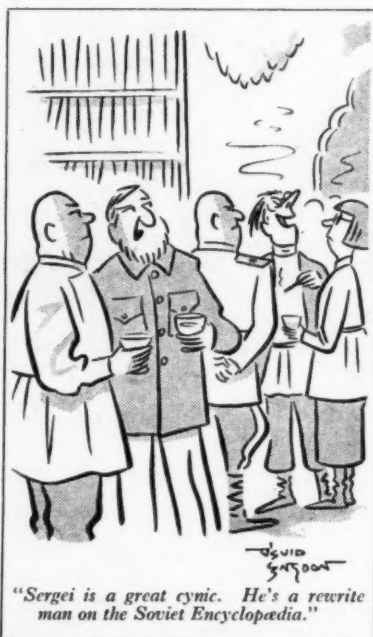
HOAD: Too right. You boys have been making a free spectacle of yourselves for centuries—it's high time you came into the lollie. Same with me: I have to think of the future. £22,300 a year may not look a heck of a future on paper, but at least I won't have to worry about carfare. How much d'you reckon you'll pull down yourself?

LORD ELDRITCH: With one thing and another I daresay I might count on three hundred a year. Then, let me see, there's ten thousand trippers to Eldritch Castle at half a crown a head... ices... cut flowers a shilling a bunch... Devonshire cream teas on the terrace... admission to the skiffle group in the West Wing... Oh, it's a fairly rosy prospect.

HOAD: Fair dinkum.

LORD ELDRITCH: But my conscience troubles me.

HOAD: Same here, clobber. I don't know how I'm going to sleep at nights. But you didn't actually sign anything, did you, saying you'd play for the love of it until next January?



"Sergei is a great cynic. He's a rewrite man on the Soviet Encyclopædia."

LORD ELDRITCH: Sign anything? God bless me soul, I can't write.

HOAD: Well then, holy cow, what are you worrying about? How about togs? Are they provided? And what about the hair-oil advertising lark?

LORD ELDRITCH: That's a possibility. My toupée looks real enough by candlelight—and my wife should know the ropes. She used to advertise face-cream. And her mother before her, come to that.

HOAD: There you are, then—you've got a good solid professional tradition behind you. How d'you stand on the gate receipts clause?

LORD ELDRITCH: Eh?

HOAD: My cut is twenty per cent of all gates. How many suckers can you expect to get into *your* stadium?

LORD ELDRITCH: About a hundred and fifty, but they'd be pretty squashed.

HOAD: Stone the crows! Does that include the bleachers?

LORD ELDRITCH: In any event, the Strangers' Galleries are free at present. There'll have to be some changes made there, of course. Say half a guinea each... a guinea in the Distinguished Strangers'... a fiver a head on the steps of the Throne... rugs and cushions extra... light refreshments... programmes... glossy photos of Lord Home...

HOAD: And a benefit debate guaranteed for every lord once a season. You could send the Whips round with a collecting-box. I hope you held out for an incentive bonus? Mine's five per cent for every match I win.

LORD ELDRITCH: That might present some difficulty in our case—we usually play for a draw. Besides, dammit, I'm a Liberal!

HOAD: You'll have to alter that, sport. Remember, there's only two sides to a net, even in mixed doubles. From now on the Liberals are going to be nothing but ball-boys. Incentive bonus? You'll be lucky if you get the odd ten bob tip, mate. Well, here you are—this is the Ritz. Let me pay the taxi.

LORD ELDRITCH: No—allow *me*.

HOAD: I insist.

LORD ELDRITCH: Halves, then. And don't forget to ask him for a receipt.

ALEX



THE PIED PIPER OF WESTMINSTER

Mr. 'Ush the Usher

By GEOFFREY LINCOLN

ALONGSIDE the clients, judges, and solicitors who fill the meatier roles in any legal drama there are bit players, character actors who appear, like minor but successful Hollywood types, in case after case and who become, as much as the stones and marble and coffee of the Law Courts, part of a barrister's life.

Some of these bit players never step into the witness box but have jobs on the fringe of the performance, like the uniformed attendants who put up the lions' cage or bring on the polar bears' bicycles. These are the judges' clerks, the court associates who sit in wigs under the judge and spend long hours gazing unhappily into space; and the ushers. Of these it is best to cultivate the ushers. Ushers have to fetch their judges and take them out of court at lunch-time, and during those endless promenades they take together down the corridors of the Law Courts the judge and his usher must talk about something.

A judge walking suddenly looks

totally unlike a judge. Picking his way in a grey wig and voluminous skirts over spindly legs, he might be about to walk on as a comic char. At this moment you would expect him to be garrulous, and this type of conversation to occur:

JUDGE: Thank God for a smoke. Have one, Barney?

USHER: Yes, my Lord.

JUDGE: Well, what do you make of this one, eh Barney?

USHER: Fishy, my Lord. Any hope of getting home early to-night?

JUDGE: I'll try and cut their speeches short after lunch. After all it is Friday.

USHER: Speaking personally I'm sweating on the 3.45 from Liverpool Street.

As a result of these short dialogues the usher becomes a useful sounding-board for the result of your advocacy. He, like Molière's cook, is someone on whom you can test the effects of your talents. If you get back early from lunch you will find the usher, a melancholy

figure with a toupée and a long black gown having something of the appearance of an undertaker's mute, finishing his sandwiches and bottle of beer among the tousled, half-read briefs in the empty court-room. If you offer him a cigarette, which he smokes in a special usher way, in the palm of his hand, you can say:

"How do you think we're doing?"

"Well sir, I took the judge back at lunch-time as you know."

"And . . . ?"

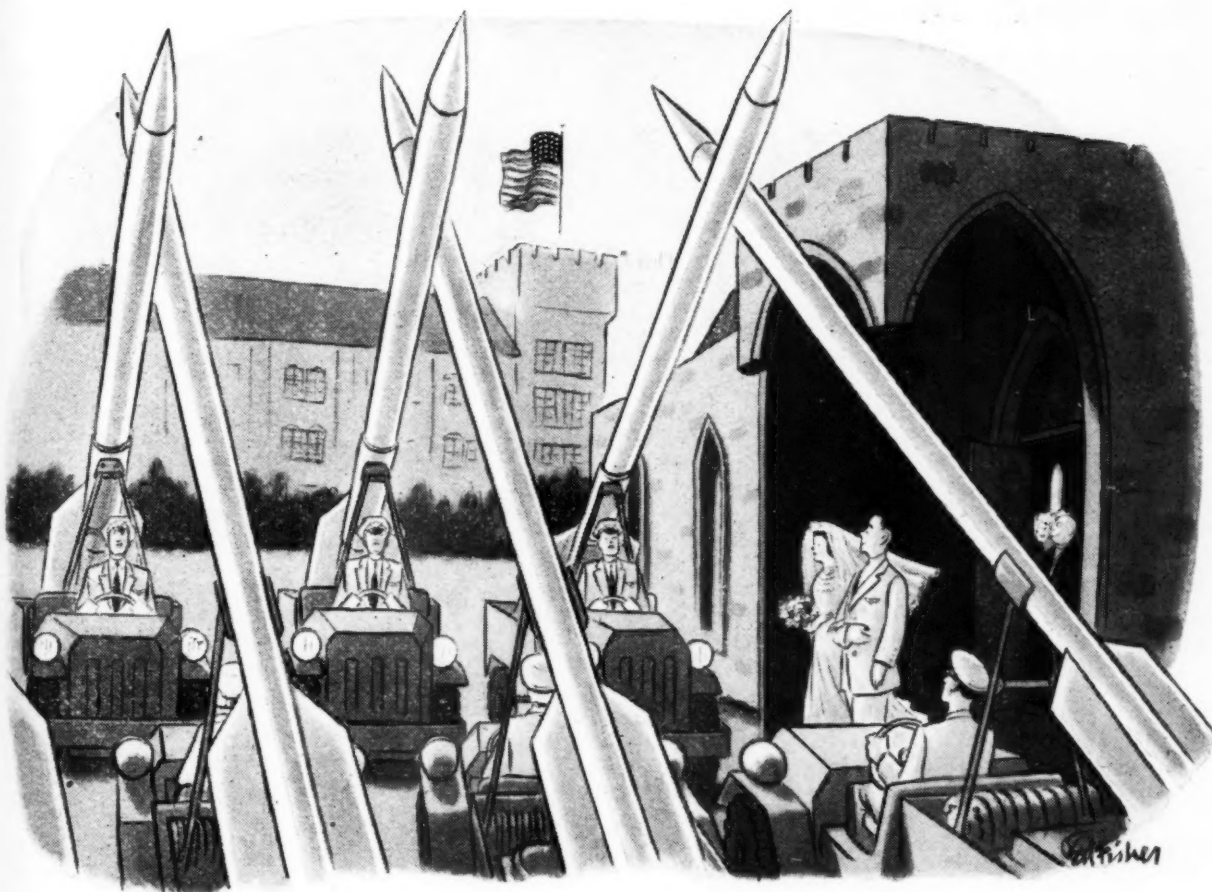
"My advice to you sir, off the record as we know, is 'keep it short.' No need to make a long speech, if you get my meaning. It's in the bag."

This will encourage you enormously and you may even tell your solicitor's clerk, when he comes gasping up, that you think you're doing all right; until you hear the usher whisper hoarsely to your opponent that his advice is to keep it short, that there is no need for him to make a long speech, and that he's got it in the bag. You then realize that the usher, far from having any reliable information about the case, is simply sweating, as he told the judge, on the 3.45.

Ushers, for all their melancholy appearance, for the most part lead happy, carefree lives. Solicitors often tip them after cases, and if they are ushering in a court which specializes in twenty undefended divorces a day they can do as well as waiters in quick-lunch cafés. Occasionally they get into difficulties, as when they forget to remove their empty beer bottles from the table in the well of the court before they lead the judge in with all pomp at 2 o'clock and trumpet for silence. When they are required to hand up letters to the witness box they are, in fact, invariably outside the court, resting against a wall with a smouldering cigarette cupped in the palm of their hands. It is then that barristers can make savage remarks, such as "If we had an usher I might ask you to look at that photograph of your husband and ask you who the lady in the bathing suit is on his knee." Before you can finish any such cutting aside, however, the usher always bangs coughing in through the door and hands the witness, upside down, a photograph of someone else's wedding.



"The Joneses can please themselves—this year we're keeping down with the Browns."



In some courts the ushers become great experts on law and will come and glance contemptuously at your books before the case begins:

"What you got?"

"Liverpool Tramways v. Bleaker."

"Asking for it a bit, aren't you? Lord Dropnut's judgment and the old boy hates Dropnut. All very small-minded, we know, but why not oil him up a bit? I'll get you 'Bizley Motor Cycles and Harding.' He decided that himself."

Sometimes the usher tells the judge that the report he wants is based on very dubious law, as well as being only to be found in a court at the other end of the building: this is a good way for an usher to get moved to a court of undefendeds.

Sometimes ushers show strength of character. At Stoke-on-Trent an Assize Judge hit on the idea of sending his usher out on small errands of domestic shopping during the course of barristers'

speeches. Ushers do not like this sort of thing as they prefer to spend such hours sleeping creakingly on a small upright chair in the well of the court. By way of revenge the usher took to coming into court in the mornings, bawling "Silence" and then slamming the door in the face of the judge behind him who, instead of stepping into a mute and respectful court-room, was brought to a dead stop by a solid and resonant piece of oak. This nervous judge was driven to creeping into court in front of his usher, peering neurotically behind him like a man on whom the Hound of Heaven is creeping up for a photo finish.

On the whole it pays to be kind to ushers and not to use them, at any time, for purposes of demonstration. Appearing for a husband a barrister may examine his client like this:

BARRISTER: You never assaulted your wife?

CLIENT: Certainly not. I merely got hold of her affectionately to calm her tantrum.

BARRISTER: You might just show us how you got hold of her affectionately. My Lord, might he demonstrate on the usher?

JUDGE (*unenthusiastic*): Oh, very well.

The sacrificial usher is then led forward nervously, and as soon as he is in range of the scarlet-faced ironmonger in the witness box is seized with every appearance of vindictive rage and shaken until his teeth rattle and his toupee slides over his rimless glasses.

"If I were a fragile wife," the judge is later constrained to say in his judgment, "or indeed if I were a fragile usher, I should have been distressed at the violence of that attack." It does no good. Don't use the usher for any purpose but as a source of cigarettes or information about the judge, and don't rely too much on him for either.

Harcourt Street Station

By A. H. BARTON

HARCOURT Street Station was built in Dublin in 1859 so that the late Mr. Percy French might make his Remark about it; and for the first forty years trains always left the station in a southerly direction, working their way down the coast to Bray, Greystones and Wicklow. In 1900, however, a train from Wicklow failed to stop at Harcourt Street and left in a northerly direction, crashing through the buffers and the high stone wall to hang suspended over Hatch Street. Because the Irish have a long memory there are still people at Bray, Greystones or Wicklow, or even at Harcourt Street Station itself, who ask for a ticket through to Hatch Street. Architecturally, the station has the Eustonesque look familiar to those who know the Acropolis in Greece.

It is a fine place for an argument. One evening recently the bishop of the diocese climbed the long flight of broad steps and stood at last in the portico. He was wearing ankle-length gum boots, thick purple stockings, the cord breeches he'd had as a chaplain in the Dublin Fusiliers in the first war, and a tartan wind-cheater his daughter had sent him from Medicine Hat, Alberta. On his head he wore a Donegal tweed tam o'shanter. Under his left arm was a small oil stove, on his right shoulder a set of golf clubs as old as his breeches. He stood there regaining his breath and listening to the warm contralto of the lady who sells newspapers among the pillars. Beside him there stood an American of kindly appearance, with notebook, yellow cigar and wide pale hat.

From the platform stepped another bishop. In from the south on episcopal business, he wore a glossy tall hat with

strings, a frock coat, an apron and gaiters. One hand held a dark purple suitcase, the other a purple sports bag specially adapted to carry a dismantled crozier. Stamped in gold upon each bag were the words CHARLES KILBRUGGAN; for this was the bishop of the combined dioceses of Kilbruggan, Ballispooley and Ud. He was tall and beautiful, a credit to the Church of Ireland.

"There's eminence," said the newspaper lady to the first bishop. "There's a lovely man."

The first bishop grunted and leaned back against a pillar. "Get out of my diocese," he yelled suddenly.

The Bishop of Kilbruggan paused at the head of the steps and turned his head. "You may go home and get properly dressed," he pronounced. He started down the steps, thought better of it and came back. It was dusk now and his great ring winked in the reflection of the neon sign of the lounge bar recently embedded in the portico by a forward-looking management. "It's one thing for a bishop to travel abroad looking like an Irishman's idea of an Englishman's conception of a turf-cutter's uncle," he said, "but it's another matter when that bishop bawls public defiance at his peers."

"Now he's telling you," said the lady.

"I couldn't resist it," said the first bishop, placating him. "Such dignity and splendour."

The bishops gazed at each other with eyes that told of long association. To relieve her feelings the lady proclaimed her wares in a chant that might have been a seven-fold amen. The American had drawn closer and was writing in his notebook.

"There are two sides to everything, after all's said and done," said the first bishop, trying again.

A smile spread suddenly across the face of the Bishop of Kilbruggan. He put down his cases and made a gesture that embraced the whole station. "Except Harcourt Street Station," he said. He took off his tall hat. "Oh bedad," he said. "Except Harcourt Street Station."

The first bishop began to laugh. He shook all over. He put down his stove and clutched his stomach. The American stepped forward, notebook at the ready. "Pardon me," he said, "but would it be inquisitive to inquire what it might be you gentlemen are laughing at?" The bishops pulled themselves together. "You see," said the American, "my grandmother was an Irishwoman, born near here in Hatch Street, and I am on a vacation. The Irish Elks of Owl Balk Fort, Nebraska, of whom I am a vice-president, have commissioned me to take back to them a selection of Irish anecdotes with which to freshen our ritual."

"Well now," said the first bishop. He picked up his stove again. "I said that there were two sides to everything."

"And I," explained the Bishop of Kilbruggan, "said 'except Harcourt Street Station.'"

The American looked expectant.

The Bishop of Kilbruggan put his hat on. "There's an old saying in Dublin," he said, "that there are two sides to everything except Harcourt Street Station. The remark was originally made by Percy French himself."

There was a pause. The American still looked expectant. He had not long to wait.

"Come on, Charlie," said the first bishop. "We'll take our friend here up to the platform." The Bishop of Kilbruggan picked up his cases and the three men walked through the portico and up some steps beyond. As they arrived on the platform a train came in from the right and stopped short of the buffers and high wall that protected Hatch Street from it. Opposite them, beyond the train, was another high grey wall. "This is the only platform," said the first bishop. "There's only one side to this station."





The British Motorist takes to Russia



"It all started with a simple round robin to him about the rent."

America Day by Day

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

MOTORISTS in America for years have been debating what is the best thing to do when you are given a ticket by the traffic cop. The old stand-by "I'm a personal friend of the mayor" has for some reason lost its magic, drawing nowadays a mere "Oh, yeah?" from the officer. Some prefer to accept the tickets and let them pile up without paying the fines, but this too often leads to the authorities discovering after an interval of time that you owe them for a hundred and sixteen and getting nasty about it. It has been left for a Miss Vivian Masters of Newton, N.J., to hit on the ideal policy. Given a ticket recently by Patrolman Charles Young, she called at the police station with a gun and asked if she could have a word with Mr. Young. It took Patrolmen William L. Knoll, Anthony Dyda and Clarence

Friedland half an hour to adjust matters, for the gun pointed at their chests seemed to prevent them marshalling their thoughts properly. It was only when Clarence, after thirty minutes of kidding back and forth, had the bright idea of "suddenly shouting, distracting Miss Masters' attention" that the situation was stabilized. The three officers "quickly subdued her," and then everything was pretty smooth.

A theory as to why dramatic critics, when reviewing a theatrical production, so often fail to see the sunny side has been put forward by Miss Ethel Merman, the star of the musical comedy *Happy Hunting*. She blames the first night audience and its tendency to concentrate its attention on the number of bracelets someone across the aisle is wearing rather than on the show, for this—and the

animated discussion that goes on all the time about whose husband is who with—cannot but influence the critics.

"Critics," she says, "don't live on another planet. If the audience is having a good time, how can they help but notice it? But if the audience is sitting there with egg all over its face, not moving a muscle, why naturally you get it into the back of your mind that something or other isn't going so good."

This suggestion that dramatic critics have human feelings is regarded in the Lambs Club as bizarre.

Leonard F. Genz of Greenwich, Conn., is a man who can be pushed just so far. When they upped his Federal and State taxes, as they are doing all the time these days, he did not wince nor cry aloud but wrote a cheque and posted it to the local vampire bats. But when he

got a New York State tax form which included the words "Give complete address used for 1956 if different than the above" he felt the time had come to make a stand. He wrote to Governor Harriman about it. I don't know what he said, but it was probably something not very different than "Well, youse guys up in Albany certainly laid an egg that time. Ain't you never been to school and been learned grammar? Where do you get that 'different than' stuff? Different *from*, you poor uneducated slob."

The point, in the opinion of most taxpayers, is well taken. What I mean to say, ginks like I and you and the rest of us we don't mind having our blood sucked annually by a bunch of Draculas, but we think they got a nerve when they suck it like as if they'd never heard of any such a bozo as Fowler, if you see what I mean.

Another firm-stand-taker is Thornton Wilder, the playwright, who, reaching his sixtieth birthday recently, has decided to celebrate it by getting tough with that section of his public which he calls the lunatic fringe. This includes the schoolchildren of America who write to him:

"Dear Mr. Wilder,—Our English teacher has told us to pick an American author to write about, and I've

picked you. When did you first start writing poetry? Do you believe in God? My paper must be in by the 16th, so please reply at once."

Communications such as this he will put firmly in the incinerator. He will also resell to secondhand bookshops all books sent to him for autographing and burn all manuscripts, epic poems, suggestions for novels and privately published works submitted to him and tear up letters which say "I, too, was born in Aries. Together we can write the book that will open men's eyes to the regenerative forces that are trying to reach them," for it is this sort of thing that has been making Thornton wilder for years and years, and he feels that at sixty he is entitled to lead a new life.

Authors all over the country are inundating him with telegrams of sympathy and congratulation. It is generally felt in literary circles that this is the biggest thing that has happened since Lincoln struck the shackles off all those slaves . . . I forget how many, but it was quite a number. He has fired the shot that will be heard round the world.

It is always difficult for a man like myself, writing three thousand miles from England, to know to what extent the English public is interested in seals. Are the readers of this paper waiting for the latest hot news about them, or do

they yawn and change the subject if the word "seal" is mentioned in their presence? If I were in London I could go about asking people, but over here I just have to guess. For the benefit of those who are seal-conscious—those who are not can let their attention wander—I may mention that a seal weighing eighteen stone has clocked in at Hampton Bays, Long Island, close to where I live, and suns itself on the dock there daily, refusing to move over to make room for dockside fishermen, and sneering when they try appeasement in the shape of a dead fish.

Naturally this annoys the summer visitors. There is nothing more unpleasant for a holiday-maker who has been up a little late the night before and has gone down to the dock for a morning swim to correct a slight headache than to find himself confronted by a seal which "barks at all who approach." The last thing you want, at a moment when even a fly stamping on the ceiling sounds to you like riveters at work, is to have to cope with a barking seal.

Christopher W. Coates, curator of the New York Aquarium, says that all you have to do is get a plywood shield and advance resolutely on the creature, and it will retreat discomfited. All right, Christopher, you try it. You will find plenty of summer visitors to hold your coat and wish you the best of luck.

All the Silkworm Gut You Need

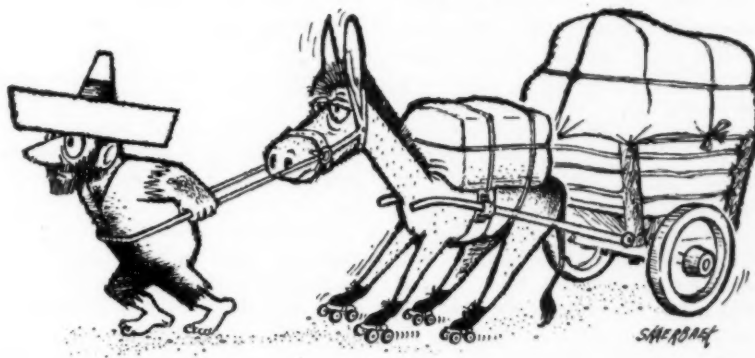
By J. B. BOOTHROYD

WRITERS of "short, nervous pieces," as Thurber has called them, are often at a loss for a random image. Thurber himself tends to fall back on emery-wheels. Benchley began an essay by describing how he was rummaging at the back of a drawer when he found a lot of old snow. The reader takes such inspirations for granted, but Benchley probably spent a morning on that opening. Bicycle spokes, lantern slides, gravy browning—all came to mind and were slung out. After hours of writhing dissatisfaction the old snow fell at last.

Thanks to the Board of Trade this curse has now been lifted. I offer them a tiny prayer of gratitude for so thoughtfully sending me their recent list of random images now importable from Canada and the U.S.A. free of duty,

because I know that when next I plunge into one of those sentences beginning "It was one of those shops with everything from — to —" I shan't have

to take a two-mile walk, muttering and groaning, before filling in the gaps. I shan't even leave the gaps. I shall write straight off "... everything from whale teeth to sliced mangoes in brine ..." and press on blithely with the plot. For





"Pity you couldn't remember the name of the restaurant that won the Waiters' Race."

the list is one of those with everything from Agar-agar to Wollastonite, with goldbeaters' skins and sodium-pentachlorodihydroxytriphenylmethane-sulphonate intervening: a feast of golden incongruity unlikely to be exhausted in my lifetime.

Coupled with the prayer of thanks, a word of sincere admiration to all at the Board involved in this operation. People are always asking nowadays what the Civil Servant does with his time. To reply that he removes import restrictions is less than just. It presents a dangerously over-simplified picture. Sir David Eccles, no doubt, can remove import restrictions with a word on the internal telephone, and feel nothing more than a passing touch of lassitude. But it is not Sir David who wrestles with the details, remembering that to free sorghums raises the whole question of milo, dari, durra, gluten, grits and hominy chop; taking the decision which smiles on unsweetened liquorice and starch, but won't have them in the country with sugar added; blandly admitting shiplap and dropsiding, but

turning away bandsaw strip more than three inches wide.

To free sand may have seemed straightforward enough. But monazite sand, as some know-all pointed out at the last minute, had to be excepted. Questions would be asked in the House, pointed out another, if they decontrolled dried hog stomachs (grouped rather oddly under "Chemicals, Drugs, Medicines, Dyes, Colours and Fertilizers") and forgot to do as much for dried calves' vells, or the feathers of the Chinese bustard ("Miscellaneous Animal and Vegetable Products not including Toys"). Manufacturers relying heavily on vells and bustard feathers would be on to their M.P.s like a flash. The same with bladders and casings, which come either natural or artificial, and demand clear direction in each class.

Naturally a few inconsistencies have crept in. Marble-dealers, for instance, may feel puzzled over the freeing of slabs on which "no other process than sawing has been carried out," while no objection is raised to marble chip-

pings and dust, which seemingly must have experienced some other process—unless, of course, there are overseas marble plants which reduce the stuff to dust by sawing. But industrial readers should not be alarmed. For the most part the speech is plain, and they may order, without a qualm, liberal consignments of bran, sisal flesh, cuttlefish bone, incense cedar, lava slabs, kelp, loofahs and shrimps including peeled shrimps. Also whole, kibbled or mealed locust beans, *quant suff*.

Like all true works of art the finished list is better than it need be. Importers of the plumage of the common cormorant, for example, would be quite sufficiently delighted to have controls removed at last; to be informed further that the bird is known to ornithologists as *Phalacrocorax Carbo* is sheer bonus. It is a fine list. But who can tell how many weary drafts were submitted to how many departmental sub-committees, only to be referred back time and again with neat minutes querying the spelling of Methyltetrahydrofuran, or recommending some more dignified designation for dried spent hops or preserved prostate glands? Many a long night the lamps must have burned late in Whitehall as the permanent officials argued over the freeing of mowrah cake and petroleum coke and skin-waste suitable for making glue. What smoke and heat were generated as meetings repeatedly failed to agree on the exclusion of sterilized catgut!

Even now, when the work is crowned with print, doubts and misgivings must still be circulating. How did cutch slip through? Was it wise to include Group 9 ("Vehicles, etc., not including Toys") when its only item is Nil? Or Group 7 ("Apparel, Footwear and Haberdashery") when its only item is Panama Hat Hoods? A captious writer of short, nervous pieces, the high-ups may be grumbling, could easily pick on things of this kind, and bring the Civil Service into hatred, ridicule and contempt.

Speaking for myself, there is no danger of this. My heart is too full. I am having the list bound in durable covers. Thanks to the Board of Trade I shall always be able to put my hand on a wool noil when I want one, or a cask of mango chutney, a tung nut, or a limestone slab, rough or worked, of any length, but not exceeding six inches in width and nine inches in depth.

Ballydehob

By CLAUD COCKBURN

ASKED about the inside breast pocket Coughlan said that he would not like to have the coat on him of a breezy day because the pocket was under his armhole."

Simply one incident in a court case occurring the other day which not only makes tailoring history but history for everyone who at any time may order a suit of clothes—or, now I come to think of it, do anything else.

The fact that the tailor and his client are residents of Ballydehob is irrelevant.

There are plenty of easy ways to make money, and one is to get someone to bet there is no such place as Ballydehob. Like Oshkosh, county seat of Winnebago county, Wisconsin (its name was

first Saukeer, but the citizenry found that unsatisfactory and, about 1840, changed it to Oshkosh), Ballydehob exists, and, like Oshkosh, occasions, by reason of its name, mirth to the uncouth. People in New York or Dublin, purporting to recount risible events, think to make them more risible yet by declaring that the chief character in their tale was "this man from Oshkosh," or that "it seems there was this fellow from Ballydehob."

That kind of thing is not only not funny but is in the worst possible taste. The whole position of towns, villages or areas which have names that make a certain type of individual guffaw should be gone into and done something

about. And be sure that the man who is not above laughing at Tomsk, Oshkosh or Ballydehob will laugh at Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard.

Well anyway, it seems there was this man Coughlan, of Ballydehob, a labourer who in his spare time was the village barber, a fact which turned out to have a certain significance in relation to the general principle which the District Justice in the Court at Skibberreen enunciated at the close of the case.

The thing started when this Coughlan, according to his own statement in court, purchased a suit length from "travelling salesmen." Nothing more might have happened if the General Election had not happened. Mr.



"We shall soon be losing another."

Coughlan went to a political meeting in Ballydehob and was there approached, according to his own account, by a Mr. Patrick Barry, tailor, who had heard about the suit length and now asked Mr. Coughlan whether he would let him make it into a suit at a charge of fifty shillings.

Mr. Barry—we may as well get the Ballydehob situation absolutely straight—said that it was Mr. Coughlan who had approached him, and furthermore that Mr. Coughlan had specified that he wanted the coat to be in “a semi-drape style.”

Reverting to Mr. Coughlan's story, he said that after the suit was made he went to Mr. Barry and told him it was “not fitting.” And at that the tailor “showed violence to him.”

“What,” inquired the District Justice, “did he do?”

“He gave me the door out,” replied Mr. Coughlan, “and told me to clear out.”

So a while later there was Mr. Coughlan (described by the *Cork Examiner* as “a low sized, slightly built man”) standing up on a bench in the courtroom in that contentious coat while Mr. Barry “demonstrated the finer points of tailoring. When Mr. O'Regan [counsel for Mr. Coughlan] started to cross-examine Barry on certain points, Barry caught Mr. O'Regan by the shoulders, turned him round, and began to indicate parts of Mr. O'Regan's suit which he claimed

were similar to those on the coat he made for Coughlan.”

Putting a wheel or so within a wheel, Mr. Barry alleged that as a matter of fact the coat had not only been put to disadvantage by Mr. Coughlan's deliberately unaccommodating stance in court but had been actually deformed by Mrs. Coughlan, a Ballydehob dress-maker.

Barry took the view that the Coughlans were conspiring to put him out of business because, in addition to making men's suits, he did women's tailoring in Ballydehob, and that conflicted with the interests of Mrs. Coughlan.

The mere idea—there seems to have been no proof that it actually happened—that someone might actually order a suit from a man and then have his wife use her tailoring skill to turn it into such a suit as would bring eternal discredit upon the original maker set thoughtful people thinking about how Machiavellian can one set of people think another set of people can get.

The moment where Mr. Coughlan's barber business came in was when Mr. Barry's counsel, after being told that Mr. Coughlan did hair-cutting “on a small scale, charging 1/- a time,” said to him “You do not give any particular style of haircut?”

“No.”

“It is just the Ballydehob haircut?”

“Yes.”

At the conclusion of it all, “holding with the defendant” (Mr. Barry, who

was being sued for £12 10s. in damages) the Justice said “I have spent a big part of the day listening to the finer points of *haute couture* in Ballydehob and I am just as wise now about it at the end of the case as I was at the beginning. The suit is not quite the Savile Row cut, but the question is, does it measure up to the local standard?”

The far-penetrating significance of the affair must be plain to all. It emerges in what the man said about the Ballydehob haircut, and in what the Justice said about the point being that the suit measured up to the local standard.

Useless, in future, to complain that we do not have as many H-bombs as some others—the ones we have measure up to the local standard. So does our imaginative political thinking. So do our roads. So does our moral outlook. It is a thought bringing much comfort to the anxious. If we can keep pace with our own, so to speak, Ballydehob, what more do we want?

“NOTICE

from
FRANK HERRERA
FURNITURE STORE

Customers are requested not to pay any monies to anyone as the above firm authorises no one to do so.

Thank you,
F. HERRERA.”

Advertisement in *Trinidad Guardian*.

Thank you, Mr. Herrera.



These are my Jewels, but they make me feel awfully cluttered

MRS. RICHARD FAIREY, "beautiful young wife of the airplane manufacturer," who may sound to you like something cosy out of *Happy Families* but was resonantly née Atalanta Clifford, has been quoted as having made the following brisk comments: "A baby is rather a tie and often very inconvenient." And again, "I'm not tremendously domesticated and I know absolutely nothing about babies." And finally, the Top-Echelon Executive pay-off, "We have all sorts of things going on and we would not be free to fulfil our commitments with a tiny child in the house."

Spoken, one might say, like a man, or at least an absent-minded eighteenth-century duchess crippled with a load of gambling debts and now this wretched indiscretion to plague her; or even like a brave Scott Fitzgerald girl gallantly determined to drain life's Martinis to the bitter lees. But anything less feminine-contemporary would be hard to imagine.

Do not believe the vaunting psychiatrists when they claim the honours for having been the first to make the British Mother aware of her full and terrifying responsibilities. This was of course achieved by Dickens, who found the whole idea of motherhood so poignantly and unbearably beautiful that his first action on beginning yet another novel was often wantonly to send some poor tender and virtuous mum into a strange wasting sickness, culminating in a scene of ghastly bereavement, so that the orphan child could go on lacerating our feelings through who knows how many instalments. English women have ever since felt a keen sense of maternal guilt about being alive at all, and are usually anxious to live up to the high standard of the Roman lady who had that nasty trick of waiting till her children came home from school and then using them to make her friends feel over-dressed and basically frivolous.

There is much that contributes to this widespread conscientiousness in the middle-class English Mother. Sometimes she owes everything, or almost, to splendid Doctor Dick Reid, or that stimulating teach-yourself-a-language-by-the-direct-method L.P. on which you can actually hear a baby being born

By SIRIOL HUGH JONES

in French. Sometimes the correspondence columns in the *Nursery World* have broken her wild, free spirit and her nerve into the bargain. Sometimes she has gone down for the third time into the angry flood of feature articles and menacing broadcasts about your plain honest duty to your children as opposed to your crazy obsession with life's trivial pleasures, that may produce acute stress symptoms and make her a bit of a liability as a cog in the industrial wheel.

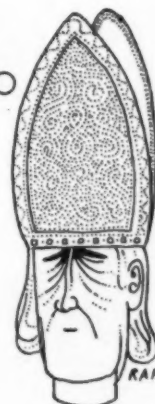
For some years now a Good Mother has been the thing to be. Murmur "Lady Pakenham" in any crowded bus or train, and back will come the free-association echo, "Mother-of-eight," a handy statistical label as memorable and full of popular appeal in its way as "Mr. Five-Per-Cent." Fathers come and go, but Miss Elizabeth Taylor travels around complete with children—sometimes of course willy-nilly, but as often as not tremendously willy. Then there's Lollo who's been having just the one baby for what honestly seems like years now, and I would add Miss Monroe to the list were it not for the fact that I cannot now recall whether Mr. Sealed-Lips Miller's last recorded statement was "No comment" or "Don't know."

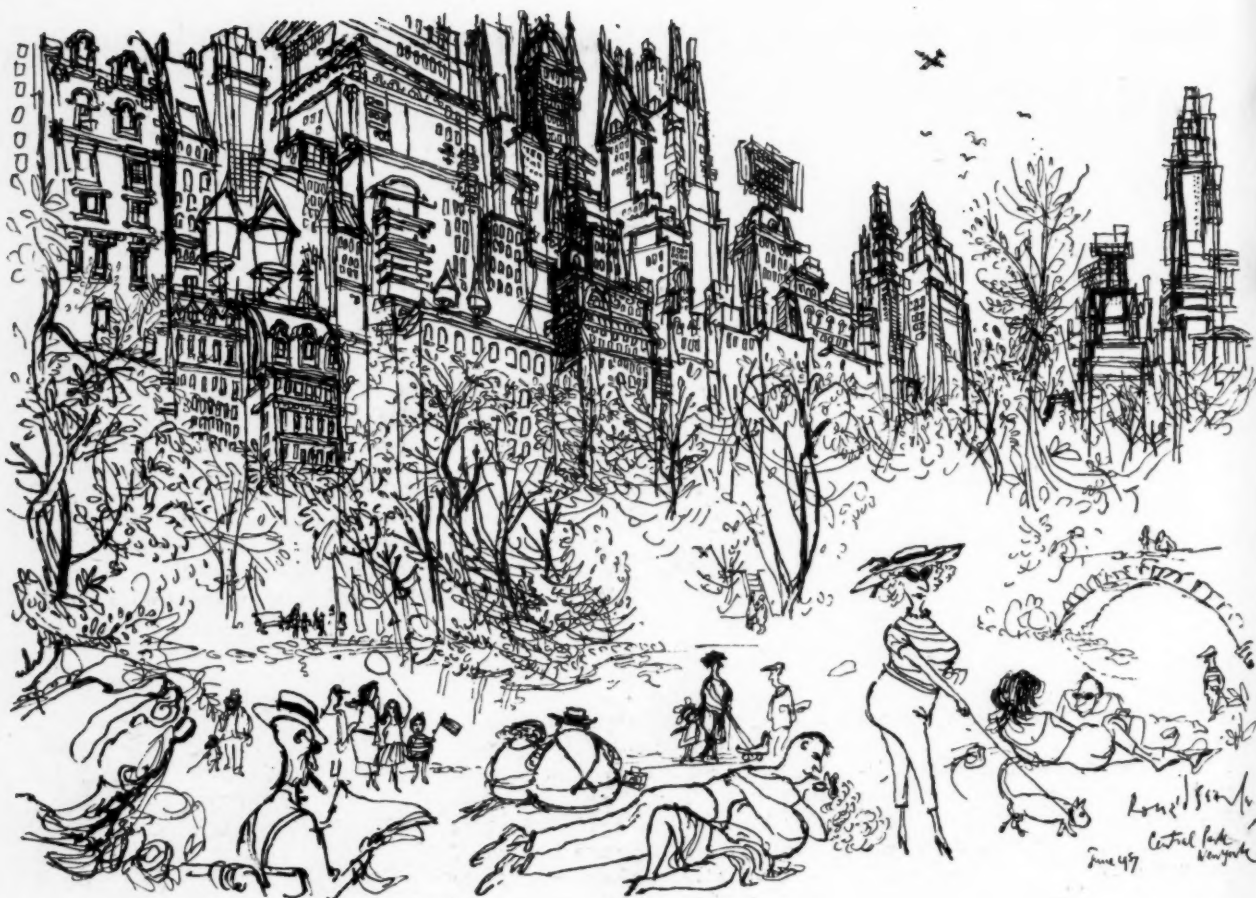
In the warm atmosphere of love and security which babies have now grown to expect they soon begin to pay their way with gratifying speed by winning quiz-game prizes, modelling, giving poetry recitals, acting, or writing daringly frank novels about parents who shirk their responsibilities. This delightful pattern has no appeal whatsoever for Mrs. Fairey, who, unused to babies as she is, will turn hers over to its grandmother who has the two-fold advantage of having a nursery and being able to knit. Lady Clifford was quoted as saying (one hopes in the clear ringing tone which has echoed so delightfully round every drawing room in which Gladys Cooper has ever played comedy) "I adore babies—but there has to be a nanny with any that come here."

How is this sound practical embargo conveyed to the loved ones? Is there a notice posted so that all who toddle

may read—"No babies admitted without nannies," or does the word simply get about, so that there is only a negligible chance of an unnannied baby turning up and thinking "Fool that I am, they're still showing the A-certificate programme"?

Evelyn Cohen, now, 13½-year-old sister to the new triplets Barbara, Susan and Carole, put forward a very different point of view on the arrival of the treble threat to the fulfilment of commitments. "It's going to be fun, for the Council won't let us keep pets, and now with three babies we shan't need to bother." Make what you like of that one, but I, who am impressed with the way the English give their all to moody white mice in need of rehabilitation and bad-tempered rogue budgerigars, know that Evelyn was expressing the point of view of the Women of England Who Have Not Spoken Yet, except here and there and now and again, to wit as above.





SEARLE IN AMERICA



Rush Hour in Galilee

By GERDA COHEN

TEL AVIV Bus Station used to be a fine place for getting rid of primal belligerent urge. There was always the chance of ramming a fat driver from behind or accidentally suffocating a tourist with a saxophone voice. The good old days have vanished. Ever since the bus co-operative extorted its fiftieth fare increase no one can afford to travel—except bus drivers' dependents—and a well-bred hush envelops the depot. There is even a ticket-collector to comment on the latest coup in Jordan while directing you graciously to a seat—with springs, note. A fight between rival ice-cream boys provides the sole touch of Oriental excitement.

For a real hand-to-hand work-out, reminiscent of the epic pioneering era, you must go up to Galilee. There the bus co-operative still caters for love of adventure and a natural hope of cutting its overheads. By the ultramarine Lake of Galilee we explored a series of booking offices, each one containing an overheated man. Steel netting protected them from the public, and no wonder. "No seats left," growled an Iraqi with a gold molar. "Come back to-morrow," advised another gold tooth. The last one, in a liturgical Rumanian accent, told us to buy a standing-room voucher at the managerial bureau.

Armed with a voucher and a recommendation from two Ministries we approached the standing-room candidates. They covered the pavement for half a mile, lounging prone on the baked gravel or squatting in the midst of hens tied together, bags full of carrots, babies, sewing machines. All chattering together with fearful energy and spitting out a hail of sunflower

seeds. Ninety-nine *felafel* kiosks emitted a reek of boiling oil and pickled radish. The Tiberias temperature fried all this with garlic and Turkish Rose, a perfume much favoured in the region. Sheer life, in fact, crude and powerful. Fearing to be lynched, passengers with seat tickets huddled behind a pile of water melon.

In accordance with the democratic nature of the bus co-operative, this apparently chaotic heap was actually organized in queues.

Queue No. 1. Expectant mothers. But all the matrons from Kurdistan and Morocco had so much drapery on them that no one dared to query membership of this queue.

No. 2. Babes-in-arms and of course the arms' owners.

No. 3. Armed Forces, which included a platoon of desert rats ready to storm the first vehicle.

No. 4. A man waving a dog-eared certificate about sciatica.

No. 5. A square lady in a blue cotton sun-bonnet from the Cultural Department of the Labour Federation, lugging pamphlets.

The last queue was a shy little tourist with a heavily-stamped permit entitling him to by-pass all queues everywhere. We joined Queue 3, hoping to crawl in under their bayonets. A crescendo of seething, like jam over the boil, rose from the public when a bus rumbled in. It was half-full already. "The driver's cousin, his cousin's landlord and the traffic manager's wife," a native of Tiberias revealed sourly. While the numbered seats shot inside, the queues came to blows over their priority. The driver showed admirable tactical skill and fist power. He'd

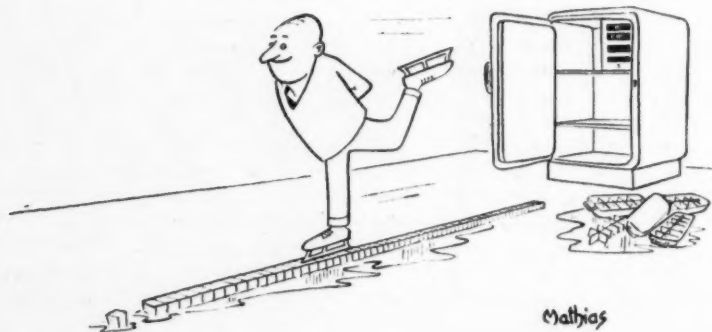
inherited the bus from his father-in-law, and was trying to wangle a deal with the Tiberias Museum of Antiquities.

Half the expectants, the cultural bonnet and the tourist find a toe-hold. The commandos swarm through the windows. Four Yemenite lads, luckily thin as pretzels, loop around the driver. Just as half a dozen passengers get out to let the door shut, up march a troop of youth from a collective settlement, chanting "Forward, Labour." The driver cannot resist this plea for solidarity. The boys climb in while the others remain outside shouting horrible Arabic oaths. We're off, rivets bulging as the bus canters down the Mount of Beatitudes.

The collective farm gang have a splendid repertoire, ranging from "Turn, turn, O water sprinkler" to a Hebrew version of Johnny Guitar.

The Yemenites know only two songs which they bawl in the interval left by the other choir. "David, King of Israel," referring not to Jonathan's chum but Mr. Ben-Gurion, and a jolly item entitled "Down with Socialist Youth." This whips the blue-shirt boys into a frenzy as they drown opposition with their school hymn: "Earth, blood, tears." The last two would definitely begin to spout did not a window choose this moment to disintegrate. "Stop the bus!" shouts the cultural envoy, hunting for a non-existent emergency cord. The driver remarks wearily that half the windows are broken anyway, so why the fuss.

Everyone is cheerful again except for our tourist who has put his foot through a hole in the floor presumably intended for ventilation. A commando extricates him, explaining that this is an historic vehicle from the period of Herzl, founder of Zionism. The visitor beams with delight. When shown a bullet scratch inflicted by the Arabs in '35 he fairly bubbles: "I'm gonner buy this car for my Israel Appeal campaign. It'll knock them silly!" The youth factions join forces to collect bits of glass in case one authentic fragment should get lost. They even find a song known to both parties, namely "Land flowing with milk and honey." It has a new text exhorting contributions to the national Defence Fund.





"Is this seat taken?"

Watchman, What of the Night?

By H. F. ELLIS

INTRIGUED by the dismissal by the Court of Appeal of the appeal by Mr. Albert Baxter English from the judgment of Mr. Justice Stable dismissing his claim for a declaration of entitlement to the statutory minimum remuneration under the Catering Wages Act, 1943, Section 1 (2) and the Wages Regulation (Unlicensed Place of Refreshment) Order, 1949, on the ground that his employment as night watchman . . .

It will be as well, since we are still

some way from the main verb, to begin again. This Mr. English claimed that as he has been employed at a catering establishment as night watchman he was entitled to be paid under the provisions of the Catering Wages Act, including quite a nice whack for overtime and "special time." The catering establishment argued that Mr. English spent a largish proportion of his working nights asleep, being indeed provided with a couch and blankets for that purpose, and they were against

paying overtime for sleep. When he was asleep he was not, they held, really working. With this view their Lordships seem on the whole to have agreed.

Intrigued, then, by this interesting legal affray, I decided to call on a few night watchmen to test their reactions to a decision that might be of vital concern to their fraternity.

It is extraordinarily difficult to call on night watchmen. Their preoccupation is to keep people out rather than to admit them, and after several nights



spent hammering on the doors of warehouses and ringing bells at catering establishments, with only an occasional glimpse of frightened whiskery faces peering through the cracks of shutters to reward me, I made a change of plan. It would be better, I thought, to call up some of these places on the telephone; and the time I chose was three o'clock in the morning, which may be supposed to be a peak hour for watchmen—a time when danger threatens most closely and every faculty is on the alert.

"Do you," I asked, when at length my first call was answered, "get paid overtime for sleeping?"

The reply made three things clear. First, that the callee had in fact been asleep (for he made no bones about asking me whether I had woken him up merely to put such a damfool question); second, that he lacked the equable temperament and calm approach to any situation a little out of the common run that are the hallmark of the good watchman; and third, that by an inadvertence understandable at so early an hour I had in fact dialled the number of one of Her Majesty's Lord Justices of Appeal.

"In that case," I said apologetically, "perhaps you would clear up a minor point in your judgment in the case of Albert Baxter English versus—"

A click, however, showed that his

Lordship had lost interest and returned to what is not, in a legal sense, work.

My next call was only slightly more fortunate. "Hello there," a voice said. "Night watchman speaking. What gives?"

"I hope," I said with the caution one learns from experience, "that I am not interrupting you in some task that brooks no delay, such as the drawing of solid fuel fires or the laying of boilers?"

"By no means," he said courteously. "I was merely reading Aristotle on the difference between Actuality and Potentiality—in the *Metaphysics*, you know."

This seemed to me to raise a point of considerable importance, and I accordingly asked him: "Would that occupation, in your opinion, entitle you to the

statutory minimum remuneration under the Catering Wages Act, 1943? Would it, in other words, be classified as 'work' ancillary to the catering trade?"

"I'm afraid I don't quite follow you," he said. "Aristotle's thesis is that all potencies are innate, like the senses, or else come by practice, like flute-playing, whereas actuality implies the *presence* of something, such as a block of wood."

This led us on to a discussion of some length, in which it transpired that he was an undergraduate of Pembroke or Balliol or one of those places, with little or no interest in the Catering Wages Act. All he wanted was enough money, before the end of the vacation, to buy a pair of trousers and Vols. V and VI of the *Cambridge Ancient History*. He had no views about sleep, which was not, he said, included in the Greats syllabus.

My third call produced an aged quaver of "What the 'ell is it *now*?" Excited, I suppose, by a conviction that I had at last found my genuine quarry I put the rather too vague question "Watchman, what of the night?" and was surprised to get the reply, "The morning cometh and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come."

"What was that again?" I asked. "You don't seem to me to have answered my question."

"It's the answer the Bible gives," the old voice answered, "and what's good enough for the Bible is good enough for me. Look it up. Isaiah xxi, 11 and 12."

He rang off, and with a sense of baffled disappointment I abandoned the whole enquiry and sought my unpaid couch. If anyone else will enquire, enquire he.

Double Fault

I DON'T mind him playing for money,
I don't mind him playing for love:
But when he acts coy then I cannot enjoy
The saddening spectacle of
An amateur thinking of money
And hoping the fact doesn't show
In his eyes as he tries to disguise his surprise
That we know he is nearly a pro.

ANTHONY BRODE



How Not to Stop Inflation

NOW that the nationalized industries, coal, gas and British Railways, have driven prices from Plateau whistle-stop to the next steep gradient the financial wizards are once again trotting out their hoary cures for inflation. So far I have not seen any mention of sun-spots or radioactive fall-out, but our current economic dilemma has been attributed to practically everything else, and the nostrums range from the abolition of commercial television to the denationalization of coal.

Most of the pundits still refuse to believe that our brand of inflation is anything more than the result of home-grown financial incompetence. Stop making money, they say, and all would be well. (Mr. Roy Harrod, however, is still asking for *more* money, more credit expansion.) "Candidus" in *Investors Chronicle* is one of the few to make a correct diagnosis: he says, and makes no bones about it, that we are suffering from "wage-induced inflation." It speaks tomes on our top-hat cerebation that such a statement should be worth recording: any man in the street will tell you that prices are rising because wages are rising, but the booky boys insist that inflation is being imported in a crate of bananas, being generated by the Welfare State, being fostered by the Treasury.

The truth of course is that Britain is experiencing a workers' revolution, and that the weapon of inflation is being used—quite consciously in my opinion—to hack away the props and trappings of economic privilege and economic caste. Steadily, inexorably, remorselessly, the rise in prices is knocking the security out of middle-class nest-eggs, chipping away unearned increments and the hoarded fruits of labour long ago. It is nonsense to pretend that inflation does no one any good, when every classical textbook on the subject demonstrates quite clearly that the whole process is inequitable. The wage-earners of Britain have made enormous

gains since the war: they pay higher prices certainly, but in terms of real income they are about forty per cent better off than in 1939, and this improvement cannot be accounted for by increased productivity and a higher national output. They have gained at the expense of the rest of the community.

"Candidus's" remedy for inflation is simplicity itself. He would say no to all unjustifiable wage-claims—"only profitable industries should pay higher wages, and then only such an increase as they know they can afford." In other words he would expect many wage-earners to accept *less* in terms of real goods, while their fellows, the lucky ones employed in progressive, prosperous, presumably non-nationalized industries, improved their differentials.

This, I maintain, is hopelessly unrealistic. During a period of expansion

and inflation employers can afford strikes less than they can afford higher wages: they pay up—whittling away their residual profits and development resources in the process—or they go out of business. And the workers know this. In Russia the dictatorship of the proletariat was part of the grand strategy of Marxism. In Britain it is the inevitable result of *laissez-faire*.

When the big show-down comes it will not concern any particular union's battle with the bosses over new incremental pay: it will be a struggle between bargaining and planning, between the out-dated principles of collective union action and the government's (Tory or Socialist) new responsibility for securing fair shares for all. Inflation will continue until we have a National Wages Board—or until we drift into an ugly, crater-like depression.

MAMMON



Neglected Sea Food

A COUPLE of years ago a French doctor sailed a raft across the Atlantic from Marseilles to the West Indies without provisions or even fresh drinking water. He proved conclusively that shipwrecked sailors can live from the sea, if they don't perish from funk, and obtain all the drinking water they need from pressing it out of the fish they catch if they have a line. And now two friends of mine have undertaken a similar kind of experiment. They have succeeded in walking along the beach from Hartland Point to Land's End, feeding themselves from the shellfish on the rocks and in the pools.

They tell me that for the first few days they lived on prawns and shrimps. They imitated most West-Country fishermen and ate them raw—they taste twice as good. Tiring of this diet, they took a stick of driftwood, attached a prawn to a piece of wire, and tied that to the end of it and then poked around under the rocks for lobsters. They caught enough in one morning to feed them for the next two days. They broiled these on a fire of driftwood. Next they turned to sea anemones which are extremely plentiful and palatable once the sand has been removed from them. For

some unknown reason we consider anemones as being poisonous, but in the eighteenth century they were thought to be a great delicacy. These two beachcombers had no fishing line or they could have caught both bass and skate which run in with the tide along gullies between the rocks, especially where there is a sandy bottom. Just below Padstow they had a lucky find, coming across a pool which was so solid with live mackerel that there was no water in it. They ate several fresh and dried half a dozen in case they should need them. But they did not. For the rest of the journey their diet was as varied as the scenery. They ate five different kinds of seaweed, excluding black butter, or laver. Everycombe provided fresh drinking water where a stream spilled into the sea. In several of these they found salmon trout in fresh water pools on the beach. They recalled that their worst meal was when they had recourse to young dogfish—which is, after all, the mainstay of fish and chips. Further down in Cornwall they had several meals from wild beds of oysters and, when bored with these, took to mussels and whelks. And the whole of their way the rocks were studded with winkles and festooned with limpets which, up to the last century, used to be collected for limpet and parsley pie.

My friends merely undertook this walk for a wager. It proves nothing than that, if one must hike, it is more pleasant to go round the coast than along the barren roads. It also suggests that we waste a prodigious amount of shellfish. That is not surprising in our over-fed culture of mediocre taste.

RONALD DUNCAN

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT



"ALL the traffic of London held up," said the bus-conductor with disgust as we passed through Parliament Square, "just so that the Parliament representatives can cross the road. That's democracy for you." "You mean the M.P.s?" said the lady passenger. "Yes, that's what they call themselves," conceded the conductor. His disgust would perhaps have been even deeper had he known that at that very moment the M.P.s were engaged on voting themselves more pay. Indeed there was among the Members themselves something of the air of a funeral service about what they were doing. Mr. Gaitskell, like Macbeth, wished that there was somebody else to do the job for them. Mr. Butler, with that engaging capacity for turning the absurd into the ridiculous which he has developed in recent months, thought that the increase was only justified if Members "dedicated" themselves henceforth to the battle against inflation. "The Chancellor," he was sure, "knows what he is doing." "Dedicated" is so good. With coal and freight up last week and telephones and postage up next week, with organized labour massing itself for its new wage demands, there was something curiously comic about this decoration of unconditional surrender in the language of the Gettysburg oration.

Who is there left in England except Mr. Nabarro, asked Mr. Nabarro, to

fight the battle of the consumer? Mr. Pickthorn thought that Parliamentary Government would be in grave danger if Members looked after themselves without looking after inflation, and Mr. Legge-Bourke, in one of the most sensible and important speeches that has been made in the House for some time, pointed out that no one objected to Members being paid decently for doing a job of work, but that they did object to them being paid for going through antics and doing no work. There is no Parliamentary Government now. Parliament has no control over inflation or any other aspect of Government policy. Members of Parliament are becoming, as he put it in a curious phrase, "fungi on the walls—absorbing, absorbing and absorbing, but having nothing constructive whatever to do with what we absorb." If pay is to be adjusted then that adjustment ought to go hand in

hand with "a consideration of what ought to be the structure of the modern Parliament." At present everything has "come to an abrupt stop." How very true, but I fear that the last thing that anybody on either front bench (except perhaps the Prime Minister and Mr. Anthony Greenwood) wants is that Parliament should work. A non-working Parliament is wholly more convenient for the party machines.

The Lords had voted themselves their expense allowance the day before, calling in aid as they did so a great deal of well-merited abuse of Mr. John Gordon. The comic part of their arrangement is that the Whips are to give the "once over" to the expense accounts. If any lord should be caught cheating once, cried Lord Home in all the awful majesty of Dr. Grimshaw, we can be sure that his experience will be such that he will not be encouraged to repeat the experiment; and noble lords were observed gingerly to stuff their robes with blotting paper at the prospect of six of the best from Black Rod.

"Cry God for England, Silkin and St. George." It has been Silkin Week this week with a vengeance. It is Lord Silkin who is determined to save us, and what nobler dragon-slayer could we have? He is not going to take the destruction of St. James's Theatre lying down, let Mr. St. John Ervine rage as he may. Mr. Ervine's case was based on the *laissez-faire* contention that a proprietor could not be compelled to go on using his property as a theatre when the theatre was losing money, but, as Lord Conesford argued in the Lords and Sir Laurence Olivier has subsequently confirmed, the St. James's has not been losing money in recent years and indeed has made a great deal of money out of Mr. Terence Rattigan's *Separate Tables*. Yet, argues irrepressible Mr. Ervine, the proprietor could make even more money by turning the place into offices. Perhaps he could and so could all other theatre proprietors. On that argument not only should we demolish the St. James's but we should demolish all other theatres as well.



"If we dedicate ourselves . . . to that task . . ."
Mr. Butler

There are two quite separate arguments in this St. James's controversy. Is the building so beautiful that it should be preserved simply as a building? Are theatres these days so few and far between that we cannot afford to lose another one? Lord Blackford does not think much of it as a building. He is entitled to his opinion though it is unique of its odd little period, but that is not really the point. The point is not that if St. James's goes then we will have plays somewhere else instead. We shall have one less place for seeing plays. Can we afford that loss? The property-rights have their importance but they should not have an overriding importance. If the worst comes to the worst the landlords could be bought out and the theatre could be taken over by the Arts Council and leased out as Covent Garden is leased out to-day. Lord Conesford, who felt so strongly about the matter that, like a twentieth-century Nazirite, he would not dress for dinner until St. James's Theatre had been saved, was very doubtful whether, the late Minister having admitted that a mistake had been made and the present Minister having accepted that position, the Minister had the legal right under the Act to refuse a revision of his verdict. Let us hope that more will be heard of that point.

Lord Silkin in this his finest week was far from content with merely fighting the battle of St. James's. On Thursday he weighed in with a general plea for more State support for the arts. The arts, he argued, had never been self-supporting. In other days they had been supported by patrons, and now that patrons were no more they must either die or be supported by public money. They were supported by public money in Britain and in every other country, but in no country in as niggardly a manner as in Britain. The argument was important and unanswerable, but liveliness was not one of the gifts with which the good fairies endowed his lordship at his birth. However, what Lord Silkin lacked in liveliness was made up by Lord Esher, and Lord Crawford followed with his sad tale of the appalling neglect of our museums. Lord Esher in his speech had prophesied what Lord Manscroft would say in reply, and his prophecy was so exactly accurate that there was really little need for Lord Manscroft to make the reply. He suggested that some museums should close down—which may be true but was hardly constructive.

Those peers who prophesied a few weeks ago that the story of women in the Lords which had begun with Lord Cohen's statistician would not end there

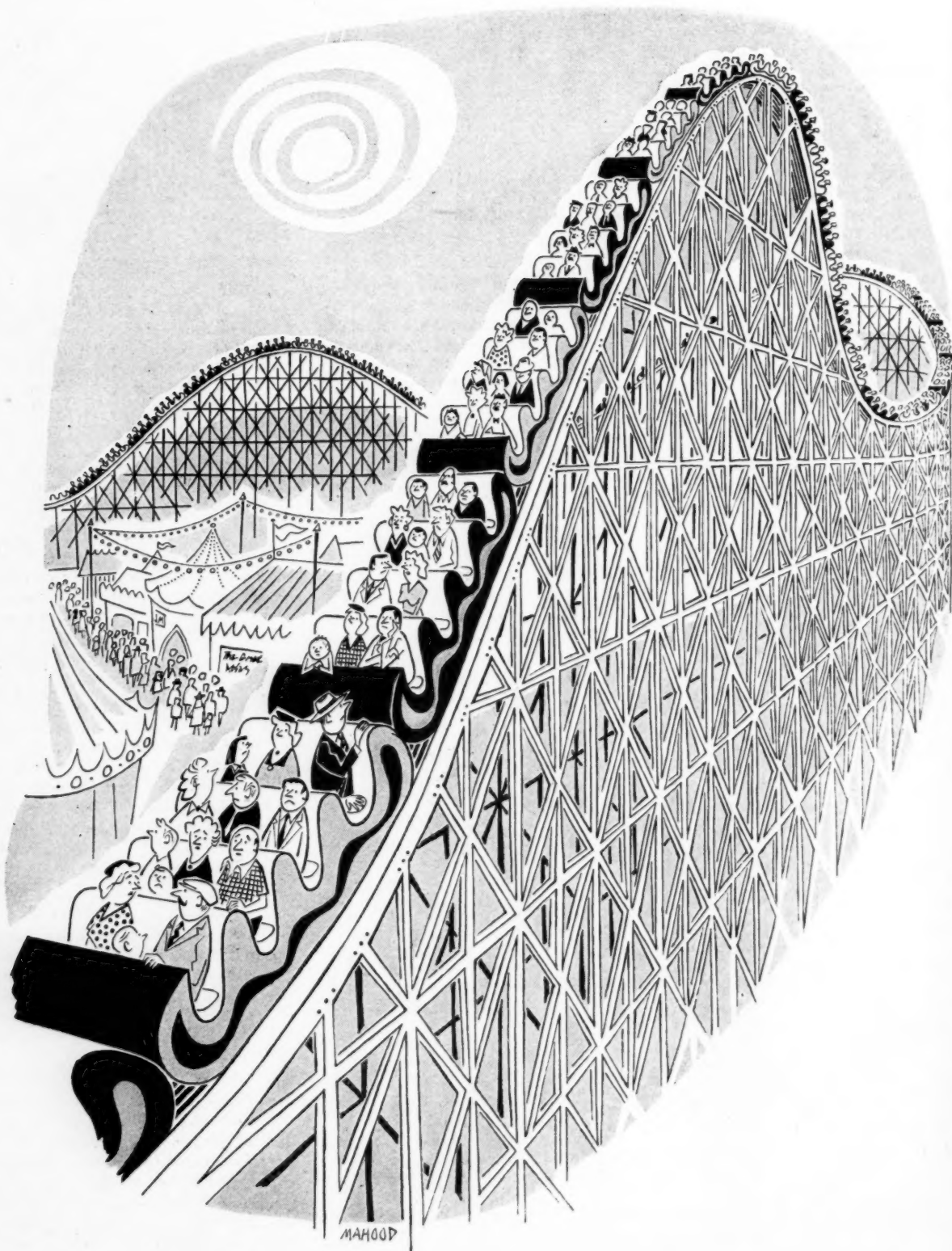


have been found true prophets. With women it never rains but it pours, and it was of course, as all the world knows, Vivien Leigh who stole Lord Silkin's show. "A woman interrupted and there were cries of 'Hush,'" primly records the Parliamentary reporter of *The Times*, but even *The Times* cannot conceal the name of the interrupter, and it is duly recorded on another page.

British railways did not get a very good run in the Commons, and why indeed should they? They are the worst in the world by a long head. They are running complacently at a loss. The Transport Commission budgeted to lose £50 million and can congratulate itself on the excellence of its forecast since it did in fact lose £54 million; and horrible things, reported Mr. Julian Snow and Mr. Hobson, took place in railway refreshment rooms—at Birmingham, at Leeds, at Coventry and at Rugby. It would need a Hogarth to do justice to these enormities, thought Mr. Snow. One can without much stretch of imagination see Hogarth in such a refreshment room. What is much more difficult is to see Mr. Snow there. The thought of that enormous and dignified figure, swimming with some disdain in a wash of spilled tea and stale beer, is one that imagination can grasp only with some difficulty.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS





PUNCH, July 17 1957

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BOOKING OFFICE For Highbrows Only

Saturn: An Essay on Goya. André

Malraux. Phaidon, 47/6

Form in Gothic. Wilhelm Worringer.

Alec Tiranti, 25/-

IT would be idle to recommend either of these two books to people who do not want to work hard at their Culture; but for those who can tackle fairly tough material there is much here to be enjoyed. M. Malraux is French, violent, dramatic, apocalyptic; Dr. Worringer, German, determined, expressive, pedagogic. In some ways it would be hard to imagine art criticism approached from such different angles; in others, one feels that Malraux may have pondered deeply over the theories of Worringer.

M. Malraux has recently been under heavy fire for his critical methods. Certainly his style of attack is the extreme reverse from the cold, almost scientific examination fashionable now for thirty years or more. He is inclined to write about pictures as if he were addressing a political meeting. At the same time, if ever there was a painter who can reasonably be investigated in that particular manner, Goya is the man. The *Disasters of War* and the *Caprices* defy consideration purely in terms of "significant form."

"The invention of a comic type requires one method," writes M. Malraux, "that of a monster drawn from the collective unconscious quite another." Goya was adept at depicting the latter, although, as M. Malraux points out, his reputation for cruelty in his portraits rests solely upon his pictures of the Spanish royal family. The three or four hundred other portraits—which include several of Wellington—are mostly of Spanish grandees, full of the sombre dignity that might be expected of their subjects.

However, as the Court commissioned over eighty portraits, there can be no doubt that the royal house itself had no

objection to the savage realism with which their features were treated. This does them the greatest credit. No doubt the truth was frightening enough; for even Napoleon, not an over-sensitive observer, said of the Queen: "She has her heart and her story in her face, it surpasses everything you can imagine..."



M. Malraux is chiefly concerned with the satirical and moralizing side of Goya's art rather than his status as a "straight" painter, and the book is excellently illustrated with parallel examples of painting and caricature to draw attention to Goya's influences. Starting life as a "man of the left," Goya had first welcomed the French invasion of Spain as a crusade against the oppression of Church and feudalism. "The *Disasters* take on their full meaning when we realize that they are not only the work of a bitter patriot but also of a deceived friend, the sketch-book of a communist after the occupation of his country by Russian troops."

All this is, in its way, more down to earth than *Form in Gothic* which first

appeared in this country in 1927; but the two books have the same foundation in that both insist that the background of any art must be understood if we hope to appreciate its full implications. Dr. Worringer (whose ideas had considerable influence on the philosopher T. E. Hulme and on Wyndham Lewis) says that he has changed many of his own views in thirty years, but prefers that his book should be reissued without piecemeal alteration. He divides the art world for purposes of classification into Primitive Man, Classical Man, and Asiatic Man.

One of his propositions is the Greek lack of interest in space. "Greek gods, Greek thought, Greek art, all have the same immediately plastic quality." This view might be illustrated by the curious sense of completeness that a Greek temple possesses, while at the same time conveying—so one feels—no sense of being part of a landscape; indeed, quite the reverse. The Goths, on the other hand—or, as Dr. Worringer would prefer, the Germans, using the term in its widest sense—had a Northern craving for abstract expression. The Greek liked sensuousness, even though Taine said of the Doric style "*Trois ou quatre formes élémentaires de la géométrie font tous les frais.*" The Goth preferred spiritualization. When the Renaissance came, religious ideas were replaced by purely intellectual ideas. That is one of M. Malraux's themes too; and I think he would also agree with Dr. Worringer's rather Nietzschean conception of the "artistic will" of a people or nation.

ANTHONY POWELL

Passion in Suburbia

The Colour of Murder. Julian Symons. Collins, 10/6

John Wilkins's marriage was foredoomed to failure, being initially based upon male sexual desire and female longing for security; but did he, in fact, during one of his periodical blackouts,

batter to death his dream-girl librarian on Brighton Beach? The accused's first-person narrative draws a blood-curdling picture of outer-London gentility (the fingerbowls provided at weekly dinners by tight-lipped mother-in-law; the bridge and television "parties"; tennis-clubs joined for occupational advancement; scratch meals in the all-electric home); the subsequent trial-sequences are enlivened with vivid sketches of solicitors, "rising silks," seedy English private-ops, seaside prostitutes, and the victim's ghoulish old father. Mr. Symons is equally at home with the mixed doubles or the double-Scotchies: depicting a scabrous Soho club, a Paddington abortionist, or a refreshing variant of the golden-hearted whore; and the minor characters' raffish locations—especially those of delightfully disreputable Uncle Dan—are impeccably recorded. This story of suburban passion and frustration, realistic enough to recall some case chronicled by Edgar Lustgarten, is the author's best since *The Thirty-first of February*. J. M-R.

The Thing Desired. Lalage Pulvertaft. Secker and Warburg, 16/-

Miss Lalage Pulvertaft, whose first novel was pleasant but slight, has now produced a second of very much greater range and maturity. The story develops round a remarkable main character, Adam Chard, a literary man of small output but vast reputation, whose ruthless lack of sympathy with those nearest to him leads to the breakdown of his wife and the near-destruction of his child. With his wife in a "rest home" in France, Chard turns his attention to a beautiful, spirited girl and we are shown the destructive process beginning its work on her. The girl is saved by finding she is already pregnant by an earlier lover. For Chard, the enemy of creation, reproduction is repulsive and the affair collapses. The sick wife attempts to murder her husband—an unnecessary touch of drama, as the book makes its own impact by delineation of character and the fact that we can, at the end, accept without a sense of contrivance Chard's death in a car accident and the girl's reunion with the father of her child.

Miss Pulvertaft's development is striking. If it continues she may one day produce something very impressive indeed. O. M.

White Eagles Over Serbia. Lawrence Durrell. Faber, 12/6

Fishermen, though their eyebrows may rise at Mr. Durrell's idea that a green-heart is the most expensive rod, will find a special interest in his novel of underground adventure in Yugoslavia, for it takes them to enviably virgin streams; but the fishing is only incidental, and not to be feared by the trout-shy in search of an unusually civilized thriller. Its hero is a retired British colonel, sent single-handed with cloak and dagger to

pry into mysterious Royalist movements in a remote region of which he possesses first-hand knowledge as an angler.

In the best sense this is school-of-Buchan. Mr. Durrell has the trick of giving vivid life to detailed narrative, and of investing small events with unexpectedly dramatic importance. His confidence persuades us that he knows his whole subject backwards, and his beautiful descriptions of the Yugoslavian highlands form an intrinsic part of a novel which carries us expertly from one excitement to another. E. O. D. K.

Revolution and Roses. P. H. Newby. Cape, 15/-

Alexandria during the chaotic period prior to King Farouk's abdication would have provided the late Ronald Firbank or the early Evelyn Waugh with an ideal setting for a comedy of misadventure: Mr. Newby unfortunately possesses neither the exotic frivolity of the one nor the exuberant imagination of the other. Humorous fiction depends largely for its success upon the author's ability to transform occupational bores into figures of lyrical fantasy or satirical fun; but here the pompous naïveté of the Greek coffee-importer Mr. Dragoumis (whose selectivist political philosophy baffled H. G. Wells), the Egyptian Lieutenant Yehia, and his young English rival for the affections of a woman-journalist assigned to cover the revolution's "harem-angle," remains unendurably tiresome. Moreover, the inexorably stupid behaviour of all concerned is plainly dictated by the requirements of an artificial plot, just as those sections ostensibly presenting the distaff-viewpoint derive from a traditionally male concept of women rather than

genuine insight into feminine psychology. Mr. Newby's brilliant descriptive gifts and poetic eye for picturesque background detail emphasize by contrast his characters' basic unreality. J. M-R.

Zero. Masatake Okumiya and Jiro Horikoshi with Martin Caidin. Cassell, 30/-

This story of the Japanese Navy Air Force, 1937-1945, is primarily the story of the Zeke (Zero) fighter which was used with great success in the Sino-Japanese war in 1940 and from Pearl Harbour until the latter part of 1942. Basically the same aircraft was in general use right up to the end of the war.

A fundamental knowledge of military logistics clearly revealed that a prolonged war could spell nothing but ultimate defeat for Japan. To be victorious with such limited resources the Japanese could only hope for speedy successes to throw the American industrial strength out of gear before the full weight of their military potential could be developed. The Japanese did not really understand the meaning of total war and with such a limited conception of the steps necessary to integrate the national resources into an effective war machine, no hope of ultimate military victory could be seriously entertained except by fanatics who encouraged the "Kamikaze" (suicide) flights. A. V.

The Club. Andrew Graham. Macmillan, 15/-

Amplified by Osbert Lancaster, this first novel has two heroes, a young Guards officer and the solid, unfashionable club of which he becomes secretary. With a reddening balance-sheet he finds himself hamstrung between the diehards and a flashy new set demanding a chromiamed playground for expense accounts, and from these dissensions the club dies. Mr. Graham gives the impression of having first-hand knowledge of its domestic politics. His elder statesmen and thrusting reformers seem authentic, and readers will easily translate his eccentrics into the odder inhabitants of their own coffee rooms. All the same, occasionally one suspects his sense of drama; surely stewards who listen in on the committee through a keyhole would quickly be out in the street?

He has been more interested in making his subject live than in turning it to satire, but in its specialized way this is an amusing social document, which offers women a ringside seat at the unspectacular mysteries of Pall Mall. E. O. D. K.

Henley Regatta. R. D. Burnell. Oxford, 30/-

"The regatta would be perfect were it not for the horrid rowing men" was a houseboat comment reported in 1889 by the outraged correspondent of *The Field*; already the little sideshow started fifty



"You'd think they'd be able to manage a clean cigarette, wouldn't you?"

years earlier by the shrewd tradesmen of Henley had become an event in the season as well as the most famous international rowing meeting in the world. In spite of that the crusty Dr. Warre was moving, as late as 1901, to bar foreign competition, his chief difficulty being the definition of an amateur. The increasingly comic veto on "manual labourers" remained until 1938.

An Oxford, Henley and Olympic oar, Mr. Burnell cloaks his authority in modest and often amusing writing. Much of this full and detailed history will interest the man on the bank; rowing men will find it fascinating. Included are an account of early Henley, a year-to-year survey of the racing, tables of winners, and well-argued suggestions for the further improvement of the regatta. E.O.D.K.

The Eye of the Beholder. Lance Sieveking. Hulton Press, 30/-

One connects Lance Sieveking with those early B.B.C. days when broadcasting manners were so precious that to-day's Third in comparison would seem as common as the *Sunday Pictorial*; but there is nothing of that in his book. His method is to think of all the well-known people in England between 1896 and 1956 and recount how he met them, or nearly met them, or failed to meet them. (For good measure he has deployed them all in an "arbor cognitionis" on the end pages.) One never feels that he knew any of them very well, and a lot of his anecdotes are veterans; in fact the whole panorama is constructed of the very best cardboard. "It is my ambition," he says at the end of the book, "to write a perfect autobiography." He may well do so; having made every conceivable mistake in this volume, he has only to avoid them all in the next, and there it is. B. A. Y.

AT THE BALLET

London's Festival Ballet
(FESTIVAL HALL)

THE summer season of ballet which the London County Council opened at its Festival Hall last week began well. An eager audience and a confident and accomplished troupe of dancers were in possession and no handicaps mattered, least of all minor imperfections. A section of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, playing under Geoffrey Corbett, was assurance enough of the musical aspect of the occasion.

Under Anton Dolin's direction and inspired, doubtless, by his enthusiasm, the company has become a homogeneous artistic entity needing no added attraction of "guest" artists, and possessing leading dancers of outstanding talent with a corps de ballet which more than suffices to fill the improvised stage.

It says much for the company that without the normal resources of a properly equipped theatre and particu-

larly, of its lighting, it can invite comparison with other ballet companies in dancing familiar works in the classical repertory.

It has now taken over David Lichine's *Graduation Ball*. This gay affair of an end-of-term get-together of schoolgirls and military cadets of neighbouring academies is well suited to display the special merits of the company. Its members get the maximum fun out of the romp. If at times it smacks of the Christmas pantomime that is no bad thing. Johann Strauss's music is an irresistible kindler of high spirits and here they are given rein captivatingly.

Anita Landa was the boldest of the young ladies and there was no understatement about her dancing drollery. Others who had their chances to excel and took them well were Margit Muller, Keith Beckett and Flemming Flindt. Janet Overton as a low comedy dame of a headmistress had Peter White, commanding the military academy, for gallant accomplice.

The second act of *Swan Lake*, with which the programme opened, was at times a too exacting test of precision. The company did better with Harald Lander's *Etudes* which brilliantly develops the simple idea of a dancer's progress from the first classroom steps to the crowning brilliance of supreme virtuosity. The company is not quite equal to the climax, but all the earlier parts had a sort of hypnotic fascination as they were danced to Knudage Riisager's clever adaptation of Czerny's familiar piano exercises.

In this Toni Lander, John Gilpin, Flemming Flindt and Michael Hogan united to illustrate the solid accomplishment of Mr. Dolin's company.

C. B. MORTLOCK

AT THE OPERA

Falstaff—Der Schauspieldirektor
Ariadne auf Naxos (GLYNDEBOURNE OPERA COMPANY)

GLYNDEBOURNE offers one of the two or three best Falstaffs in the most telling *Falstaff* heard here since the war. In opera, as when you are a Nurse Cavell, patriotism isn't enough—doesn't count, in fact; but my satisfaction in the Falstaff's being one of our own is not altogether irrational. Geraint Evans proves that these isles, which produce so many operatic nonentities, can still, now and again, turn up a *pur sang* job, as happened when the late Frank Mullings was born.

There has been some jibbing at the accent of Carl Ebert's production. The thing to be thankful for is that Mr. Evans is able to assimilate an accent when a producer puts it to him and give it forth again as if it were a strawberry mark, something he was born with. His Falstaff is a gentleman born, with occasional ogles, wiggles and leers which hint startlingly at aberration. Not at all



the kind of Falstaff I had in mind when I entered the theatre. But an entirely feasible Falstaff, one that lives and burns and crackles. With all this went true Falstaff singing: abundant baritone "meat" and a lordly casualness as well as certitude of phrasing which is of Falstaff's very soul.

There were only three other minds in the theatre on the same performance-plane, those of Mr. Gui, who conducted with mellowness and spirit; Oralia Dominguez, that Quickly of Quicklys in every aspect; and Hugues Cuénod, who proves as memorably as did Peter Klein in the case of Mime that Caius is a singable part and well worth the singing. Nobody else on the stage mattered much. In *Falstaff* four can be plenty, provided they're the right four.

Der Schauspieldirektor is a lot of chatter in German between an impresario, two sopranos who'd like to scratch each others' eyes out, the souteur of one of them (you can tell he's a banker, if you are sharp enough, because of the bags of gold he fishes from his tail pocket) and a tenor so out of the picture that he keeps bustling off in a pout and a pet. On to the talk are pegged an overture, two arias, a trio and a summing-up quartet which, being by Mozart at his most wing-clipped, quite failed to save the night. What kept me from yawning was Peter Rice's deft colour-print of a set and the stylized, salonized 1786 way Anthony Besch kept his rather dull little personages on the move.

In *Ariadne* the yawn-stopper is the music. Excellently served by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, John Pritchard conducted this with fineness of touch and the quality of calculated *abandon* that Strauss imperatively needs. The only reservation I make about the score is the Zerbinetta aria, a tightwire act

which teased the Wagnerian bourgeoisie worthily enough forty years ago or more but now looks like a crumpled antimacassar embroidered by Ambroise Thomas. Nothing like forty years for changing metaphors and values. Mimi Coertse, substituting for Rita Streich, sang it competently and coyly. In other words, she brought the very worst out of it.

The new Composer, Elisabeth Söderström, is fervent, not yet full-throated and comely of personality as well as of shape. And there were other good bits of individualism. But how cumbersome this spatchcocking of Hofmannsthal and Molière! Every time I suffer it in the theatre I resolve next time to stay home and play records of the *Bourgeois Gentilhomme* suite, this by-product of Strauss's *Ariadne* venture being the best of it by far.

CHARLES REID



AT THE PLAY

Silver Wedding (CAMBRIDGE)

I HAVE a soft spot for comedies in which Father is consulted by the Prime Minister on the telephone, for they engender a pleasing illusion of being in, even at some remove, on great

affairs; but I also like to be able to believe in what is happening in front of me, and from the start most of *Silver Wedding* has a spurious ring. The horribly forced gaiety of the Marlowe children, just grown up, is a warning signal, as at breakfast they brightly assess the merits of double beds; and all one's inner foghorns blare into life when Mother announces, after twenty-five years of apparently contented marriage, that she is setting out for Tangier on an Indian summer frolic with an American millionaire. Do these things really happen so calmly over the marmalade? If so, I was not persuaded.

Father is a diplomat, on tap like a master-plumber to stop up international leaks all over the world; and during his many tours, which strangely include the British provinces, has made a long series of conquests, his lights of love all sharing the extraordinary habit of sending his most incandescent letters to Mother, who has sat on them quietly all this time. Faced with such a formidable collection, Father takes it much more coolly than I should, and actually makes his children read the letters, as an object-lesson, I gathered, in how not to conduct the happiest of marriages. So everyone is

rather confused, while Mother packs and gets ready to go to the airport. I expect you can guess the end of this not very original little comedy, which is by Michael Clutton Brock.

Evelyn Laye and Frank Lawton play the parents, with charm but not total conviction. Mr. Lawton might be a diplomat, but he is too nicely domestic to peregrinate as a Don Juan, even if the Foreign Office had the time or inclination. There are some very long quarters of an hour, and the piece owes its only fully amusing moments to Marie Lohr, as an unconventional grandmamma from the Gaiety, who knows all about life and cunningly pulls the right strings to stop the family breaking up. No one on our stage can boom a flippancy more tellingly than she, and one could have wished her a larger part. Unpatriotically, no doubt, I came away feeling that this well-worn subject would have been treated with more wit and more credibility in Paris.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Titus Andronicus (Stoll—24/8/55), at all costs. *A Dead Secret* (Piccadilly—5/6/57), Paul Scofield and poison. *Zuleika* (Saville—24/4/57), a good British musical.

ERIC KEOWN

AT THE GALLERY



European Pictures from an English County (AGNEW'S)

MR. GEOFFREY AGNEW, who is the mainspring of this exhibition, has pursued no policy except to take the best of whatever pictures were available to make an intriguing show; and a public nursed on the perpetual complaints of those who deplore the departure of art treasures from England is likely to be agreeably surprised at the quality and variety of pictures, ancient and modern, which Hampshire alone can muster. Among the greatest names is a version of Titian's "Venus and Adonis" which invites comparison with the National Gallery example, the latter having been fairly extensively cleaned some time early in the between-war period. In addition there is a Rembrandt portrait of his father, two small Rubens pieces of single figures (not previously I think exhibited) and two Tintoretos.

It is, however, among the lesser masters that some of the most attractive works are to be found. Boucher admirers will delight in seeing the robust monochrome sketch "Jupiter and Callisto," the very lack of colour emphasizing Boucher's liveliness as a draughtsman and designer in light and shade. Again no student of portraiture should miss the sure and subtle Van Dyck morsel of two children's heads (Princesses Elizabeth and Anne). Serene and spacious Cuyp landscapes with figures confront, on the opposite wall beside some impressionists, a green Matisse landscape (an old friend



Lady Marlotce—EVELYN LAYE

[*Silver Wedding*]

which it is pleasant to see again). The show will repay several visits.

The Brighton Art Gallery (situated within a stone's throw of the Pavilion) is at any time an attraction. At the moment, in addition to the small but interesting permanent collection which includes a fantasy ("The Tower of Babel") by Patinir, there is an exhibition entitled "The Influence of Wales in Painting." Well-known works by Augustus and lesser-known ones by Gwen John, fine Wilsons and some Turner pencil drawings of Welsh scenes are features of a delightful show. ADRIAN DAINTRY



AT THE PICTURES

Around the World in Eighty Days
His Other Woman

AROUND (like Aouda, the Indian princess who was "educated in England," the title has a slight American accent; remember when looking it up in indexes not to go for R)—*Around the World in Eighty Days* (Director: Michael Anderson—no, Michael Anderson) is splendid fun. No great perceptiveness is needed to recognize it as a quite calculated mixture of all the devices known to be most successful as popular entertainment; but the great point is, one doesn't mind. The killing factor in "commercial" stuff is that it should take itself seriously and pretend to be an important work of art. This one is tongue-in-cheek throughout, and very enjoyable it is.

Among its most attractive features is the impression, reinforced by the forty or more celebrated players who appear for a few moments only in character parts, that the whole affair has been treated as a kind of game, in which everyone we see is having as much fun as we are. The idea of collaboration too is somehow basically pleasing: it delights people to think that all these great names have thrown away their dignity for the sake of joining in *together*, to make the enterprise a success.

That is basic; a lesser, more obvious charm is the sheer pleasure of recognizing the unexpected faces. And above all there is the power of the simple, easy-to-grasp story and the energy with which its effects are put over. "Never a dull moment"—the old showman's maxim justifies itself: the comic crises follow each other inexorably, bang—bang—bang, giving you no time for critical reflection between one laugh or sensation and the next. The never-failing expedient of the chase is used again and again: if there is no other excuse for including some well-known spectacular phenomenon in one of the countries traversed by Phileas Fogg, the film arranges for Passepartout or somebody to be chased through it or past it...

And back now and again, for a breather, to the Reform Club, where the four



Phileas Fogg—DAVID NIVEN

Passepartout—CANTINFLAS

sturdy British clubmen who have wagered that Fogg won't succeed discuss with increasing consternation the news of his progress as reported in a *Daily Telegraph* that incredibly, towards the end, breaks into seventy-two-point headlines about it. David Niven is perfect as Phileas Fogg; Cantinflas, the gentle-looking little Mexican clown who wears his moustache in two far-sundered commas, makes Passepartout a most delightful character; and there is variegated pleasure in nearly every foot of the piece.

Goodness knows why they changed the title of the film that is in the U.S. called *Desk Set* to, of all things, *His Other Woman* (Director: Walter Lang); but I suspect a deliberate intention to mislead. This is a very gay and fresh "sophisticated" comedy in the same sort of key or mood as *Designing Woman*, and I suggest that the faded, conventional, love-affair title it is here cumbered with will keep away many people who would immensely enjoy it, even if it fills the theatre with paying customers who will miss half the points.

The scene is mostly in the Reference Department of a big broadcasting company, where Bunny (Katharine Hepburn) and three assistants are constantly telephoning answers to questions, ranging from the details of Eskimo culture and quotations from *Hiawatha* to the names of Santa Claus's reindeer. Into this friendly and efficient office comes an expert (Spencer Tracy) to install an electronic brain capable of rattling out answers to any such questions typed into it. The girls see their jobs disappearing, and combine against the intruder; but

after the office Christmas party (champagne out of paper cups, frantic gaiety—a beautifully done episode) the machine occupies their room, with one earnest attendant, and instead of the cheerful sound of their obliging voices there is nothing to be heard except its muted clicking, chirping and an occasional hoot.

The climax of course is that the machine ("no machine can evaluate") gives over-literal answers to questions inaccurately put by the earnest attendant, and breaks down; and it turns out that the girls weren't to lose their jobs at all. Meanwhile, the gruff expert and Bunny have fallen in love... Impossible to describe briefly the funny, intelligent charm of this film. It is in colour, and among the other excellent people concerned is Joan Blondell as the senior of the three assistants, who blithely mothers everybody, Bunny included.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Another this week was *These Dangerous Years*, obviously aimed at the teenage market, in which Frankie Vaughan shows remarkable possibilities as a star. Best of the established ones in London I think are last week's three (10/7/57): the fine, gripping *A Man Escaped*, the gay *The Prince and the Showgirl*, and the excellent, perceptive *The Bachelor Party*.

None of the releases was reviewed here. *The Lonely Man* had a generally good press, though I thought it a rather conventional Western; *Something of Value* is well-done, stern stuff about Mau Mau; *How to Murder a Rich Uncle* tries too hard to do what the Ealing films used to do so easily.

RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

I.T.V. in the Picture

IT is extraordinarily difficult to get at the truth about the finances of commercial television. The programme contractors are companies with eggs in many baskets, and they are no more willing than other industrial empires to reveal which eggs are added and which are hatching out. They had a pretty thin time during the first eighteen months of the new service and for obvious business reasons have been reluctant to advertise the incidence of their difficulties.

But people with a nose for financial returns may hope for better times. Independent television has turned the corner and is now in the money: being human the programme contractors will advertise their change of fortune in the knowledge that nothing succeeds like success and that the faint hearts of 1954-55—the people who didn't get in on the ground floor—will review the bonanza figures and kick themselves.

Snippets of information and inspired guesswork suggest that Associated Television, Granada and Associated-Rediffusion are all in the clear. The latest returns from ABC Picture Corporation show that a trading loss on the TV subsidiary of about £100,000 in 1955-56 has been converted into a "satisfactory profit." Bookings from advertisers are rolling in, viewing figures are very good, and costs of programme production everywhere have been substantially reduced.

At this point the critic must ask why. Why in so short a time has the I.T.A. service been able to break up the B.B.C.'s monolithic monopoly? Why do so many



DICK BENTLEY ROSALINA NERI ALEC D'ARCY

people with a choice of programmes prefer the ads. and filmlets of commercial TV to the Maundy Money offertories of Lime Grove? One answer (probably the right one) is to credit the I.T.A. with providing what the public wants. All the viewer-research figures show clearly enough that the average family steers clear of cerebral entertainment unless it is heavily sprinkled with star value, with TV personalities as predictable in their behaviour as the characters of strip cartoons. On all channels it is the same: the audience tends to switch off or over as soon as the screen picture strays from sport, patter, pops, romance and glamour. And because the B.B.C. can and the I.T.A. cannot afford to cater for minorities the latter's returns in terms of viewers are much more satisfactory.

But this is not the whole story. To a large extent the current preference for commercial TV represents a revolt against the B.B.C.'s ingrained smugness

and lack of enterprise. B.B.C. television is still far too often sound-radio with pictures: the years of bureaucratic caution and faded blue-stocking propriety have conditioned the very atmosphere of the TV studios, and the resultant stuffiness creates real resentment in people who have sampled the ozone-with-fish-and-chips of Channel 9. I have no space to provide adequate illustrations. Consider, however, the B.B.C.'s news, the dreadful efforts of the studio team to appear bright, breezy and casual, the ridiculous, wilful carelessness in diction which is supposed to generate mateyness and insouciance. When the B.B.C. lets its hair down the stuff comes away in its hand.

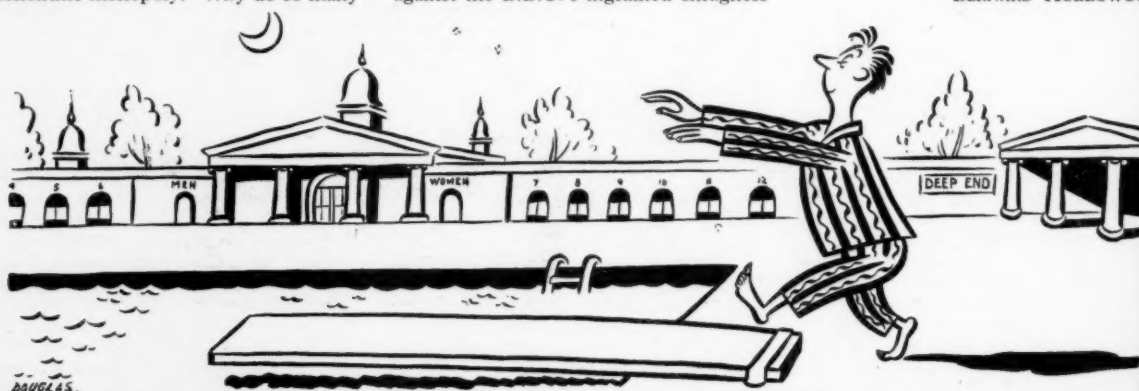
With the exception of a few items—"This Week" and occasional documentaries—independent television has very little to offer the thoughtful viewer. But it is at least honest in its vulgarity, blatant in its corniness and free (almost) from the conventional coyness of the older channel.

A typical commercial programme is Jack Hylton's "Hotel Riviera," a sort of East End cabaret. The stars are Rosalina Neri, a Latin edition of Diana Dors, Dick Bentley and Alec D'Arcy.

Miss Neri croons and sings (often in mime to gramophone records) and continues to look innocent while the salty wit of the cross-talkers ricochets between her ears.

I find this programme utterly tasteless and devastatingly dull, but it is with such fare that the I.T.A. is winning the battle of the channels. And it is useless to complain when a commercial service is successfully commercial.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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